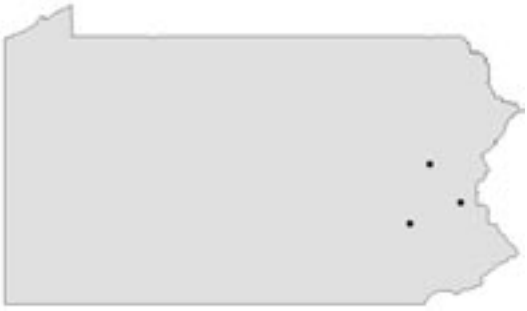
PENNSYLVANIA



Office Locations:
Bethlehem, Jim Thorpe, Reading

MANUFACTURERS RESOURCE CENTER (MRC) Through three offices, serving manufacturers in Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton and Schuylkill counties of Eastern Pennsylvania. Contact: Edith Ritter, 125 Goodman Drive, Manufacturers Resource Center, Bethlehem, PA 18015, (610) 758-5599, Fax: (610) 758-4716, Email: webmaster@mrcpa.org, Website: http://www.mrcpa.org

COMPANY CLIPS

Ashland Technologies Receives Workforce Training Funds

Ashland Technologies, Inc. is a custom machine shop. It also manufactures and distributes its own branded line of fuel filter systems for all diesel applications. Founded in 1996 in Ashland, Pennsylvania, the company employs 12 people. As a U.S. Department of Labor and Industry-certified training facility for journeymen, Ashland Technologies provides participants with the training and tools they need to run their own facilities. The first year of the program suffered several setbacks. Without proper training resources, participants weren't meeting the criteria to advance to the next level quickly enough, which in turn drove up costs. The company contacted the Manufacturers Resource Center (MRC) for assistance.

MRC is a company's first stop for workforce training assistance. The organization helps area manufacturers apply for grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development. Qualified companies receive free job training, which is provided through the Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania, known as WEDnetPA. This alliance of 14 State System universities, Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges, Pennsylvania College of Technology, North Central Industrial Technical Education Center, CAMtech, Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center, Lancaster County Career & Technology Center, and University of Pittsburgh-Bradford provides a diverse array of training that employers need most.

MRC helped Ashland Technologies secure a much-needed grant from the WEDnetPA program, and aided the company's development of a training plan. As a result, participants are advancing more quickly through the journeyman program and the company's profit margin has increased about 20 percent due to better throughput. The journeyman program has grown by 50 percent, and Ashland is currently in the process of buying another company, where it plans to institute more training and expand the journeyman program.

Continued

THE MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP IN PENNSYLVANIA

Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a nationwide system of services and support for smaller manufacturers to become more globally competitive. At the heart of the system is a network of affiliated, locally-based manufacturing extension centers. Each center, like MRC, is a partnership, typically involving federal, state, and local governments; industry; educational institutions; and other sources of expertise, information and funding support.

STATE STATS

DATA* COVERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2001

Number of projects completed with firms
253

Number of firms served
117

Number of firms served for the first time
3

Federal cost share for current operating year
$588,000

State/other cost share for current operating year
$1,176,600

**Data as reported from center*

DATA** COVERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2001

Increased sales & retained sales
$53,055,001

Client capital investment
$28,898,702

Total cost savings
$5,566,006

Jobs (created & retained)
863

***Source: Independent client impact survey*

For additional information, contact Dede McMahon 301-975-5020

Goulds Pumps Strives for Continuous Improvement

Goulds Pumps supplies the global market with high-quality chrome and stainless steel pumping products. The company, in business for over 150 years, is located in Ashland, Pennsylvania, and employs less than 500 people.

Goulds Pumps needed help implementing techniques that would help reduce lead-time and costs and improve quality, especially in its stainless steel castings area, which directly affects on-time pump shipments to customers throughout the world. Goulds Pumps contacted the Manufacturers Resource Center (MRC) for assistance.

Under MRC's expert guidance, a team of Goulds Pumps employees evaluated the stainless steel casting process and found the Air-arc operation to be particularly problematic. The process requires the use of a hand-held "Air-arc" torch to remove gates and risers from stainless steel castings. This labor-intensive process required a considerable amount of employee overtime and caused a work-in-process bottleneck. MRC formed a team of individuals from both the shop and the office, and challenged it to increase productivity (throughput) and eliminate the bottleneck. In five days, the team implemented several changes to improve efficiency. The changes saved Goulds Pumps $140,000 in total costs, completely eliminated the troublesome bottleneck, and reduced the average cost per piece by 50 percent.